

# On a new subspecies of the skylark *Alauda gulgula* Franklin in Gujarat, India<sup>1</sup>

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While cataloguing the Skylarks *Alauda gulgula* Franklin in the collection of the Bombay Natural History Society, I noticed that 7 (4♂♂ 1♀ 2o?) of the 8 specimens from Kutch and Gujarat could be distinguished from the neighbouring subspecies *punjaubi* Whistler to the north and nominate *gulgula* to the east and south by the following characters:

- (a) Upperparts darker than in both *punjaubi* and *gulgula*.
- (b) Breast more prominently streaked and coloured.
- (c) Larger bill and hind claw, as per table of measurements attached.

On these differences, I separate them as:

## *Alauda gulgula dharmakumarsinhji* subsp. nov.

*Holotype*: ♂ collected by R. S. Dharmakumarsinhji at Bhavnagar, Gujarat, on 26 April 1953, bearing No. 21279 in the collection of the Bombay Natural History Society.

*Paratypes*: ♂♂ Nos. 21276, 21277 and unsexed 21278 and 21378 collected at Bhavnagar, Gujarat, by R. S. Dharmakumarsinhji on 26 April and 17 June 1953; and ♂ No. 9058 from Saiat, Kaira District, Gujarat, on 12 December 1945, and ♀ No. 9057 from Mandvi, Kutch, on 8 March 1944, both by Sálím Ali.

On the last date another skylark was obtained at the same place, which I have placed with *punjaubi*. One or the other was an immigrant or straggler.

This bird is named after R. S. Dharmakumarsinhji of Bhavnagar, the author of *BIRDS OF SAURASHTRA* and well known in ornithological circles in India. He sent the birds to the Bombay Natural History Society in two lots in 1953 but no correspondence other than the covering letter is now traceable and I do not know if they were ever carefully examined by anybody before.

It may also be of interest to mention that in the course of my work, I have examined some 580 sexed specimens of different species of larks, of which 65 per cent are males, the preponderance in some groups, as in the present instance, being more pronounced.

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*Alauda gulgula dharmakumarsinhjii* subsp. nov.

TABLE OF MEASUREMENTS

		Wing	Bill from feathers	Tail	Hind claw
♂ ♂	<i>dharmakumarsinhjii</i>	91,92,93,95	12.2*,15,15.4,-	47,51,52,56	17.5-24* av. 20.2
♂ ♂	<i>punjaubi</i>	93-100 av. 97.3	11.8-14 av. 13	50-56 av. 54.5	12-17 av. 14.5
♂ ♂	<i>gulgula</i>	86-95 av. 90	13.2-14.9 av. 14.2	46-52 av. 49.6	11.3-17.3 av. 13.9
1 ♀	26? <i>dharmakumarsinhjii</i>	90,92,92	14.6,13.7,14	52,48,50	19,18.2,22.3
♀ ♀	<i>punjaubi</i>	87-99 av. 91.5	13-13.6 av. 13.3	47-53 av. 51	11.2-15 av. 13.6
♀ ♀	<i>gulgula</i>	85,88	13, 13.1	46,50	13.3, 14.1

\* No. 9058 from Saiat, Kaira District has a small bill but the longest claw.